**Production Regions to Prioritize for Farming Systems Investments in Africa**

* Sub-Saharan Africa as a broad focus and within that moist and dry savannahs and again within that specific systems (agro-pastoralist systems, crop-livestock systems)
  + Maize-mixed farming syst. [Eastern and Southern Africa]
  + Cereal-root crop mixed syst. [West Africa]
  + Agro-pastoral syst.
  + Highland temperate mixed syst.
  + Perennial mixed syst.
  + Peri-urban syst.
* Should we have a similar ranges of rain fall in both West and East Africa for comparability? Should be range and distribution.
* Thornton, Dixon, Giller: Should be taken as a starting point. Agro-ecological zones (maize-sorghum-millet based systems, legume systems) and livestock within these systems. Maize and Sorghum could be prioritized.
* Disagreement: We have to de-commoditize systems research. We just pick similar agro-ecological conditions for comparison within the current regions. After selecting agro-ecologies you dig into other criteria such as population density, market, culture, diversity of households etc.
* Livelihood systems approach - focusing on the broader system

**Bottom-up Look at How Multi-Donor Platform Could Look/Work**

* Platform should bring partners together for knowledge exchange, joint research, joint communication
* To strategically target research with no duplication and more synergistic value addition approach including capacity building, policy investments/ support existing African mechanisms for prioritization e.g. FARA etc.
* Coordination effort in the region
* Technology park model/innovation hubs where scalable innovations from all projects could be showcased, discussed (open even for other development partners, private industry)
* To work closely with regional policy bodies (ASARECA, CORAF, NEPAD, CAADP etc.)
* Synthesis of data across regions and data management platform for systems research in agriculture
* Pool funding (a critical issue with CRPs) versus component funding; from a bottom-up view continuity and larger investments in funding would matter/ Explore flexible models for different options of funding by donors?
  + Look for expanded resource
  + Being effective with the current available funds in a way that can be seen
* Example for multi-donor-platforms: CRS (Collaborative Research Center; private-public partnership), PABRA (Pan-African Bean Research Alliance; network of bean researchers); these examples should be explored
* Could the platform also serve as a center of excellence (good practices in systems research)?
* To mainstream systems research in donor institutions and mobilize further funding from non-traditional donors (private sector, Gates Foundation, DFID, Master Card)
* Is there any existing body with similar functions that we could build on?